

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 9 to 11 and 14 to 20 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Objection to Claim 15

Regarding the objection to claim 15, the Examiner will note that claim 15 has been amended herein without prejudice to change “areas is arranged” to --areas are arranged-- as suggested in the Final Office Action. Withdrawal of this objection is therefore respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter included in claims 15 and 16. Since the objection to claim 15 has been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that claims 15 and 16 are in condition for immediate allowance. Since claim 19 depends from claim 15, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19 is also in condition for immediate allowance.

IV. Rejection of Claims 9, 10, 14, and 17 to 20 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 9, 10, 14, and 17 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over PCT International Patent Application Publication No. WO 01/58731 (“Nikolaus”). It is respectfully submitted that Nikolaus does not render unpatentable the present claims for at least the following reasons.

As an initial matter, and as indicated above, claim 19 depends from claim 15, which was indicated to include allowable subject matter. Thus, it is respectfully submitted claim Nikolaus does not render unpatentable claim 19 due to its dependency from claim 15.

Regarding claims 9 and 17, the Final Office Action appears to have misapprehended these claims. In this regard, the Final Office Action states at page 6 that “[c]laims 9 and 17 are not specific in describing ‘the surface having at least two contact areas of a thin-film sensor faces away from the surface of a printed circuit board having at least two contact pads.’” However, the antecedent of “the surface”

of a thin-film sensor appears on lines 2 to 3 of claim 9, i.e., “a thin-film sensor including **a surface having at least two contact areas**,” and the antecedent of “the surface” of a printed circuit board appears on lines 4 to 5 of claim 9, i.e., “a printed circuit board including **a surface having at least two contact pads**.” The foregoing makes readily apparent that the surfaces of a thin-film sensor and a printed circuit board referred to on lines 5 and 6 of claim 9 are the surface of the thin-film sensor **having the at least two contact areas** and the surface of the printed circuit board **having the at least two contact pads**. Any contrary reading of claim 9 is untenable.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, claim 9 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that a thin-film sensor includes a first surface and that the first surface has at least two contact areas. Claim 9 has been further amended herein without prejudice to recite that a printed circuit board includes a second surface and that the second surface has at least two contact pads. To conform to these amendments, claim 9 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that the thin-film sensor is arranged relative to the second surface of the printed circuit board such that the first surface of the thin-film sensor having the at least two contact areas faces away from the second surface of the printed circuit board having the at least two contact pads. Claim 17 has been amended herein without prejudice in analogous manner.

Entry of the foregoing amendments should not be refused on the grounds that they raise new issues requiring further search and/or consideration. In this regard, any issues raised by these amendments are essentially those considered in response to the “Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116” filed on March 10, 2008.

In contrast to the foregoing, elements 12a and 12b shown in Figure 2a of Nikolaus, which the Final Office Action contends constitute contact areas, are provided on a surface of element 12 that **faces toward** elements 11 and 14 shown in Figure 2a of Nikolaus, which the Final Office Action contends constitute contact pads. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Nikolaus does not disclose at least the following feature included in claim 9, or the analogous feature included in claim 17: “the thin-film sensor arranged relative to the second surface of the printed circuit board such that the first surface of the thin-film sensor having the at least two contact

areas faces away from the second surface of the printed circuit board having the at least two contact pads.”

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Nikolaus does not render unpatentable claims 9 and 17.

As for dependent claims 10, 14, 18, and 20, it is respectfully submitted that Nikolaus does not render unpatentable these dependent claims for at least the reasons more fully set forth above.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

V. Rejection of Claim 11 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Nikolaus and U.S. Patent No. 6,867,602 (“Davis et al.”). It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Nikolaus and Davis et al. does not render unpatentable claim 11 for at least the following reasons.

Claim 11 depends from claim 9 and therefore includes all of the features included in claim 9. As more fully set forth above, Nikolaus does not disclose all of the features included in claim 9, from which claim 11 depends. Davis et al. does not cure the deficiencies of Nikolaus. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Nikolaus and Davis et al. does not render unpatentable claim 11, which depends from claim 9.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

VI. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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